

WATER/WASTEWATER FACILITIES COMMISSION
COMMISSION MINUTES
April 8, 2015

A meeting of the City of Fitchburg Water / Wastewater Commission was held on April 8, 2015 at the JA Provincial Building, 1200 Rindge Rd, Fitchburg, MA.

The meeting commenced at 4:45 P.M.

Members present: Lenny Laakso, Commissioner DPW
 Rick Healey
 Michael McLaughlin
 Ron Lubianez
 George Siener
 Carol Brown

Members Absent:

Others present: Jeff Murawski, Deputy Commissioner Wastewater
 John Deline, Deputy Commissioner of Water
 Mary Jane Franklin

ITEM # 1: Approval of last meetings minutes:

The minutes for the March 11, 2015 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

ITEM # 2: Public Forum:

No public forum comments were received.

ITEM # 3: FY2016 Budget:

Mr. Deline presented the Commission with a draft FY16 budget for the Water Department. He gave a summary of what has been taken from retained earnings. As of June 30, 2015, \$922,000 is available, with the assumption that \$160,000 will be used to balance the budget. Mr. Deline has met with David Berger (Distribution Manager) and Rick Parviainen (Treatment Manager) to prioritize projects that need to be completed. Mr. Deline will provide a capital Improvement plan to the Commission within the next few months.

ITEM # 4: Water Rate Study:

Mr. Deline reported he has rescheduled a meeting with Tighe & Bond regarding the water rate study for the end of May.

ITEM # 5: Hydrants and Flushing of Water System:

Mr. Deline has had a discussion with Fire Chief Kevin Roy regarding the hydrants to ensure they are flushed and operational. Mr. Deline will begin with the Scott and Oak Hill Systems and he hopes to have staffing help from DPW and the Fire Department.

He discussed the importance of flushing and how it impacts on water quality.

ITEM # 6: Huron Street – water main break:

Huron street had a main break this winter that caused significant damage to the road which will need to be repaired. He believes this will cost approximately \$30,000.

ITEM # 7: Water Street – water main break:

The Water Street main break will be repaired in approximately one month. He explained the high system water is leaking and a permanent repair needs to be done in this area. It will most likely be a complicated project as two of the cross beams, which the mains rest on are rotted thru and will need to be repaired also.

ITEM # 8: Replacement of valve on Main Street at Oliver:

The valve at Main and Oliver will need to be repaired as it is limiting fire protection. This will be done within the next two weeks.

ITEM # 9: Update on sewer infrastructure damage in the Nashua River (near First Street and Railroad Street):

Mr. Murawski reported the condition with the problem manhole has been monitored on a daily basis and has not deteriorated. Weekly CCTV monitoring has been done on the 8 inch branch sewer coming out of First and Railroad. After four captures, not only is there no sign of deterioration, there appears to be some improvement. Mr. Murawski believes this may be due to tightening of the sand bags placed around the steel plate. The river flows are still too high to do any main work (water or sewer). The contractor will be provided the scope of work when the flows are lower.

Wright Pierce has provided a multi task proposal, one of which is for the river manholes. Because the river manholes are a high priority, Mr. Murawski solicited a second proposal from one of the on call engineers, Weston & Sampson and he is reviewing both proposals.

He mentioned the possibility of adding water to the scope of this work, although no decision has been made yet.

Mr. Murawski reminded the Commission that the contractor is required to be on site within four hours of notification if needed.

ITEM # 10: Discuss Development of the “scoping” & scheduling for:

- **Hazel Street and Beech Street areas and the remaining two river sewer manholes**
The Hazel and Beech St areas along with the remaining two manholes are included in the multi task proposal from Wright Pierce. Hazel St is upstream of the regulator that can't be closed. They are geographically close to one another.
- **Combination Manholes Separation:**
Part of Wright Pierce's proposal will be an engineering services contract dedicated for combination manholes.

Requirements of both the NPDES permit and the Consent Decree (the Consent Decree incorporates by reference the NPDES Permit) concern provisions of combination manholes. If a combination manhole shows evidence of transference of flow, from one side to the other, it needs to be separated within two years.

The first 6 manholes identified as needing to be separated were completed by the on call contractor, however it is not the most cost effective way to complete this.

Mr. Murawski stated one possibility for handling this issue would be to work with contractors to complete a drainage project in lieu of an I/I fee payment.

ITEM # 11: SSU Project:

- **Update on OPM Selection Status:**
Mr. Murawski announced CDM Smith has been chosen to be the OPM for the SSU project and a meeting has been scheduled with them to discuss the scope of work and execute a contract agreement.
- **Update on Construction Phase Engineering Services RFP Status:**
Mr. Murawski communicated that the required requisition had been provided to Purchasing Office for solicitation of Proposals for Construction Phase Engineering Services, but there has been no movement to date from Purchasing.

ITEM # 12: CSS-4D Project:

The construction phase is set to begin again. Excavation could be delayed due to the current weather conditions and the risk of freezing. Hot mix asphalt will be available at PJ Keating beginning April 13, 2015.

ITEM # 13: Paper Mills Billing:

Mr. Murawski summarized a meeting he had with the Mayor and Mark Goldstein (Assistant City Solicitor) regarding paper mills billing on November 24, 2014. Mr. Laakso and Denis Meunier

(former Deputy Commissioner of Water) also attended. They discussed the fact that the billing methodology for the mills has been the same for decades. It is a complicated quarterly process that is vastly different than the billing system for everyone else. Mr. Murawski will contact the Assessors department regarding the Mills tax rate (and would that play a factor in any rate changes). A letter should be drafted to the Mills to inform them of the contract expiration date to alert them to a possible change in billing. The President of City Council should be involved in this discussion. A phased implementation was also discussed which would lessened the financial impact to the Mills.

There was a discussion on how to approach the paper mills and when. Also, what meetings should take place before reaching out to the mills and who should be involved in these.

ITEM # 14: West Plant Anaerobic Digestion, Public Forum Meeting, and “next steps”:

Mr. Murawski stated there seemed to be a lot of interest regarding the meeting at FSU. Weston & Sampson’s deliverable will be a draft feasibility report. The draft feasibility report will be made available to the public. It will be an evolving document, incorporating comments from the public and various Commissions and Boards.

Presently, Fitchburg’s sludge is being landfilled. He explained there is a finite amount of space left at the landfill in Fitchburg. There are only an estimated ten years left of the landfill. After that it would most likely become extremely expensive to dispose of Fitchburg’s sludge. Anaerobic digestion would be a no cost solution for Fitchburg’s sludge needs.

Mr. Murawski discussed different procurement processes such as design, bid, build and be City run and financed or it could be a privatized operation, design build operate, which would minimize risks for the city.

There was some discussion regarding other, hypothetical options.

ITEM # 15: Other Business:

Mr. Laakso introduced Mr. Deline to the Commission.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2015 at 4:30 P.M. at the JA Provincial Building, 1200 Rindge Rd., Fitchburg, MA.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Minutes Prepared by _____
Mary Jane Franklin